



Sheffield TIMES

Community News for Sheffield & Ashley Falls, MA SECOND GENERATION Vol. II, Issue 6 July/August 2003



Drive by an auction house like Bradford's or by the Legion Hall during a T.A. Gage auction and the usually empty lots are full to bursting with people looking for that "something special", or just looking.

AUCTIONS IN AND AROUND SHEFFIELD

Sheffield, known as an antiques destination because of the many dealers in town, is also a good area for anyone interested in country auctions. Sheffield is home to one auction house and the site for another's sales, with other auction houses nearby.

"Auctions are one of the smartest ways to buy belongings," says Robert Emberlin, auctioneer and part owner of Bradford Galleries on Route 7 in Sheffield. "So much of what we sell is a good value, especially when you compare it to new stuff from a department store." He points out that good-quality antiques are likely to appreciate in value, while furniture bought new will only lose value.

Bradford Galleries was founded by William and Lois Bradford, Robert Emberlin's mother and stepfather, in the 1970s. Emberlin took over running the business after Bill died in 1996 and Lois moved to Florida. In 1975, the firm bought the old Meadows Drive-In property on North Main St., where they are located today, after a previous location burned down. Bradford Galleries holds an antiques auction every month but March and holds special

book and ephemera auctions — for books, posters, and other paper items — five times a year.

The highest-price item the firm has ever sold? A Connecticut cherry highboy that went for \$75,000 after two bidders kept raising the price in \$5,000 increments. "We were surprised," Emberlin said. "We expected it to go for \$25,000 or \$30,000. But that's the auction business. You never know."

One of Emberlin's more interesting auctions was disposing of props and scenery from the movie "Before and After," shot on location a few years ago in the Berkshires. One of the most memorable items was found in a large, heavy canvas bag pulled out of a garage. Inside was a German-made collapsible sailboat, "so beautifully constructed and preserved," Emberlin said, "you couldn't believe it had been sitting there amidst \$50 sofas and racks of old shoes." It sold for \$3,000 to someone who planned to display it as sculpture.

Emberlin first became an auctioneer some 20 years ago when his stepfather dragged him to a charity auction in Connecticut and turned

the gavel over to him. "I got up there and rambled on," he recalled. Now, running an auction is "pretty routine." He says he runs his auctions in a friendly, informal way and will back up the bidding if someone inadvertently makes a bid when they are really swatting a fly. Such situations become part of the show. "You need humor to keep people engaged and attentive," he explained.

Informal though they may be, Bradford Galleries auctions are renowned throughout the Northeast and attended by phone or proxy by people as far away as California, Texas, or Europe. A catalog is prepared for each sale, available via

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To everyone who has donated since the last issue to help keep the *Sheffield Times* going! To anyone we missed, we'll get you into the next issue.

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mail. The books and ephemera auction catalog is also available by e-mail. In each auction, items will sell for a range of prices, from \$50 lamps to \$7,500 carpets, Emberlin says.

Tips for buying and selling

The best advice Emberlin can give to prospective buyers is to come and examine the items in the preview before the auction. Bradford's has three days of viewing before each auction, with estimates of the value in the catalog to help people decide what they can afford. Staff is available to answer questions. "Make sure all the legs are tight, all the drawers work, there's no obvious glued repair," Emberlin said.

Thomas Gage, an auctioneer based in South Egremont who holds his auctions in the American Legion Hall in Sheffield, also stresses checking out the merchandise ahead of time. "Make sure you know what

you're bidding on," he says. Gage offers a preview for the day of his sales, which begin in the evening.

Emberlin considers eBay a "very wonderful tool" for certain items, such as porcelain or silver with all the recognized markings. But for buying furniture, it's less useful because you can't closely examine or touch an item. "There are a lot of really good fakes out there," he says. He notes with pride that Bradford Galleries always brings reproduction and "second period" (a furniture style redone 100 years after the originals) furniture to buyers' attention.

"Antiques Roadshow" has educated a lot of people about the values of what they might have considered old junk, Emberlin says, but the prices on the program are typically too high. "There are two values -- replacement, or insurance, and resale value -- and there's usually quite a spread between the two. 'Roadshow' prices are closer to replace-

ment prices," he said. "They don't have to try to sell at that price. We have to prove ourselves in an auction."

Emberlin's best advice to sellers is to have someone look over items before selling them privately or throwing them out. He or his staff will come take a look for no charge or obligation, and he encourages people to get second opinions. Gage offers the same kind of service.

An auction house, unlike a dealer, sells on commission, so the higher the selling price, the more money both the seller and the auction house makes. The commission is in the form of a "buyer's premium," a percentage tacked onto the winning bid, typically 12 percent. "We're on the same side of the fence," Emberlin says. "Every auction, people are totally surprised at how we generated that dollar amount from what looked like a pile of crud."

--Andrea Scott

CABLE MODEM FOR SHEFFIELD DELAYED

Mary Sevey, Adelphia's general manager for the North Adams and Lee area, told the Sheffield Times last winter that Sheffield could expect cable modems to be available in June or July of this year. With the "broad band" of a cable modem, Internet access and other computer communications can be much faster

than with a dial-up modem.

But "things happened," Sevey said in a recent interview, and she doesn't know "exactly the date when Sheffield will be activated." The five towns of Lee, Lenox, Stockbridge, Gt. Barrington, and Sheffield will all get cable modem availability sometime by the end of the year, she says.

SHEFFIELD MILESTONES

Two beloved members of the Sheffield Senior Center died within the last month: Audrey Farquharson and Eleanor Griffiths. Both contributed so much to the community at large and will be sorely missed by all of us. To their families, the Senior

Center sends heartfelt condolences.

Is there someone you would like to honor by noting a birth, marriage, death or other significant event? Send us their name and a sentence or two on them, the event or their contribution to Sheffield.

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AUCTION SCHEDULES

Bradford Galleries in Sheffield holds monthly auctions, except in March, and book and ephemera auctions five times a year. The next furniture auctions are Sat., July 19, and Sat., Aug. 5. They start at 10:30am. The next book and ephemera auction is Sun., Aug. 24, starting at noon. 413-229-6667.

T.A. Gage, based in South Egremont, holds monthly auctions from March to November and around Thanksgiving and New Year's, at the American Legion on Rte 7 in Sheffield. The next auction is a Holiday Clean-out Auction, Sat., July 5, preview at 1pm, auction at 5:30pm, Also, August 2. Call 413-528-0076 for additional dates and times.

Fontaine's Auction Gallery in Pittsfield holds "discovery" auctions on Friday nights once a month and larger catalogued auctions four times a year. Call 413-448-8922 for dates and times.

Meissner's Auction Service in New Lebanon, NY, holds weekly auctions, with big sales around the major holidays. Call 518-766-5002 for dates and times.

government P R O F I L E

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Position: part-time, unpaid; appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

Current members: Paul Sullivan, chair; Morris Decker, Jim Herlihy, Wayne Robbins, June Wolfe, and two open positions; Mary Ellen O'Brien, secretary.

Regular meetings: 7pm the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month in the Carlton French meeting room of Town Hall. The first meeting of the month is for public hearings and the second, while open to the public, is for filing paperwork.

Duties: Steward of Town forests, conservation land and easements; enforces state, federal and local wetlands regulations; issues "order of conditions" for construction projects in affected areas; other conservation responsibilities.

Woodlands, farms, fields, parks, rivers, streams, bogs and ponds are key components of Sheffield's rural character, the scenic vistas, wildlife habitat, water quality agriculture and recreational opportunities they provide. The Conservation Commission is charged with preserving these open spaces, especially the wetlands. Wetlands help prevent storm damage, reduce flooding, protect groundwater, prevent pollution, and provide wildlife habitat, including some rare and endangered species (see the "Last Great Places" article on page 9).

Town conservation commissions in Massachusetts were formed under the Conservation Commission Act of 1957 (G.L. Ch 40 sec 8C) and given responsibility over each town's open space and other natural resource protection, such as identifying key parcels that should be

protected, working for acquisition of land by the town or other forms of protection, and managing local lands dedicated to conservation and passive recreation (hiking, biking, cross-country skiing), along with specifically enforcing inland wetlands regulations from the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (G.L. Ch 131 sec 40). Conservation commissions in other Massachusetts towns also organize recycling and other programs that enhance the local environment.

Massachusetts has one of the strongest and most effective wetlands protection acts in the country and is frequently used as a model for other states. The wetland regulations protect not only land under water, but also the surrounding land, called a buffer zone, which is why it is possible to be in a protected area even when standing water is not

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visible or the ground is not wet.

Residents who wish to dredge, fill, remove or alter any area subject to the Wetlands Protection Act need to check with the Conservation Commission before beginning work. Some of the activities that are subject to regulation include: clearing trees and brush, diverting a stream or river, replacing or constructing a culvert, constructing a new driveway or road, altering or building a bridge, drawing down a lake or pond, digging a pond, working on or near a dam, pumping water from a wetland, installing storm water basins, putting in a foundation, house, drain or any similar activity. The Conservation Commission welcomes residents to come to any meeting or call the chairman, Paul Sullivan at Knox Trail Realty in Sheffield and Great Barrington, to ask questions about their potential project.

The application process begins with a Request for Determination of

Applicability, or RDA, for which there is a \$50 fee. This is a simple form (available from the Town Clerk) asking the Commission to decide whether the project in question falls under the auspices of the Wetlands Protection Act. A copy of the RDA also goes to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The commission will conduct a site visit with the applicants and hold a hearing at the next meeting. If the determination is negative, the project may proceed. If the determination is positive—that is, the project does take place in a buffer zone or wetlands resource area—but the Commission finds it will not adversely affect that area, the Commission will allow the project to proceed, perhaps with some conditions in place to insure the safety of the resources and the long-term wellbeing of the property.

If the determination is positive and the project *will* impact the

resource area, the applicant may be asked to file a Notice of Intent, or NOI. The NOI is a more involved process, providing more substantial and detailed information about the project and the resources, which is also reviewed by DEP and perhaps other agencies. Fees for filing a NOI vary according to the project. There are several local engineering firms who are expert at filling out and filing the NOI.

Projects that are completed without getting a determination could result in the project having to be undone or done over, and in some instances fines imposed by DEP. Conservation Commissions in conjunctions with DEP are also charged with enforcement of wetlands protection actions.

For more information about wetlands protection go to www.state.ma.us/dfwele/df/nhesp/nhlayers.htm or www.state.ma.us/dep/consumer/protwet.htm.

—June Wolfe



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community NEWS

GOODBYE, KELLYS!

Later this summer Kingsley and Sally Kelly will be moving to a retirement community in Concord, N.H. A special celebration in their honor, complete with original songs, gifts, and a visit from the Glory-B Clowns, was held in their honor on May 10 at Old Parish Church.

In their 50-plus years owning land in Sheffield, 28 of them as full-time residents, the Kellys have left their mark on the town. Many of their interests have been mutual. Both, for instance, have been deeply involved with Old Parish Church, working with the annual antiques show and the Church's Mission Committee, where each served as chair. King spearheaded a drive for \$1,500 to provide a well for a rural village in India. Fifteen years after the donation of the well, King and Sally, in celebration of their 50th anniversary, traveled to the village, bringing with them an additional check for over \$900 from Old Parish. Motivated by Sally's vision, Old Parish established *Kid's Club*, which offers quality childcare for very young children one day a week so their moms and dads can have a morning off.

King is the church's unofficial greeter, a genial presence with a gift for putting people at ease. Like Sally, he has served on numerous committees, perhaps most notably as a trustee, where he served two differ-



Kingsley and Sally Kelly have a good laugh at the Glory-B Clown's tribute to them during the May 10 farewell celebration hosted by Old Parish Church to thank the Kellys for their contributions to the community.

ent terms and helped Old Parish raise \$174,000 for capital repairs, the most successful fund raising campaign in the church's history. Sally still sings with the choir.

King and Sally have also been the official delegates of Old Parish to its denomination, the United Church of Christ, where they are known and respected throughout Massachusetts. Old Parish's per-member giving to the wider mission of the UCC is consistently among the highest in Berkshire County a tribute, in part, to their leadership.

Nor has their vision been limited to their church. Soon after they arrived, King and Sally became interested in Gould Farm, a residential therapeutic farm in Monterey. Having first been selected for board membership in 1974, they will continue as honorary board members even after they move, as an acknowledgement of their many contributions.

Sally has also been a member of the Bartholomew's Cobble Committee for 15 years.

One of Sally's special gifts is

drama. Almost from their first days here she has shared her talent with others. For 20 years she directed a variety of shows at Gould Farm, including *Mary Poppins*, *Anything Goes!* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*. For many years she was involved with the Sheffield Children's Theatre, and she taught drama to sixth graders at Undermountain School. Most recently, she organized and has led the Glory-B Clowns. Now consisting of seven women and one man (her grandson), they have delighted audiences throughout South County.

Sally's enthusiasm and giggle are infectious. She plays the role of the sad-sack hobo "Gus" in the Glory-B Clowns. At the celebration to honor King and Sally, the other members of the troupe, with respect and affection, dressed and acted like hobos as well. King and Sally were in the front row, holding hands and laughing. "King is just a great guy," Sally says, giving him a warm smile. "He would do anything for his family."

Many families gather at Thanksgiving for a large meal. When the

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three generations of Kellys, including 15 grandchildren, gather at King and Sally's home each year, talent shows, scripted and rehearsed plays and spontaneous skits are as important as food.

King and Sally live on County Road on the Sheffield-New Marlborough line in a charming farmhouse surrounded by peach and apple trees, "an elastic house," says Sally, to fit her large family. The setting is New England bucolic. Beside the house are two unpainted barns, and in the distance, stunning views of the East Mountains. Sons Art and Jim, with the help of King, developed the orchard — Woodside Orchards. A Massachusetts Agricultural Preservation Restriction secured with the assistance of the Sheffield Land Trust now protects approximately 310 acres of orchard and woodland. Through the summer and fall King spends hours each day lovingly caring for the trees. Kelly fruit, offered for sale in local markets and their own front yard, is a late

summer treat.

Part of what makes King and Sally special is their genuine appreciation for Sheffield. They note there are many fewer dirt roads now than when they first came in the '70s, and they are concerned about the gradual loss of farmland. But they applaud recent efforts to save the Housatonic River and are enthusiastic about renovations in the center of town, especially the refurbishment of the Old Stone Store. "It's just a great town!" they exclaim.

Church, family, community and land might be four words that sum up what King and Sally Kelly are all about. They love Sheffield. They are devoted to Old Parish. They have raised and adore five children. All of them consider the 300-plus acres off County Road with its orchards, lovely views and fond memories their home. When King and Sally decided the time had come for them to leave, the whole family was concerned about what

SHEFFIELD FOOD PROGRAM

Every Monday morning volunteers from our community gather at Old Parish Church to distribute food to individuals and families who, for a variety of reasons, just can't "do it all." Food is donated from area churches and businesses (Big Y, Price Chopper, etc.) and bought from donated funds.

If you, or someone you know, is in need of food assistance, call the church office (229-8173) or stop in on Mondays from 9:30-10:30.

And don't forget, there is a drop-off barrel for non-perishable food items inside the Sheffield Branch of Berkshire Bank, so you can make a contribution any time the bank is open.

would happen to the land that had meant so much to them. To everyone's delight one of their sons, Jim (who runs the orchard), his wife Barbara and son, Dwight, were more than ready to take over as the new stewards. "It's a dream come true," say King and Sally together.

—John G. Wightman

Churches & Services

ASHLEY FALLS

Grace Bible (non-denominational)
355 Clayton Road (413) 229-8560; parsonage (860) 824-7442. Sunday: 9:30am Sunday School (ages 3-adult); 10:30am Worship Service, nursery care provided; Rev. Edward M. Eastman Jr., Pastor

Trinity Methodist (United Methodist)
1156 Ashley Falls Road (413) 229-2712. Sunday: 9am Service. Pastor Betty LeGeyt

SHEFFIELD

Christ Church (Episcopal)
180 Main Street (413) 229-8811
Sunday: 8am & 10am Holy Eucharist; 10am Sunday School & childcare; Thursday: 10am Holy Eucharist & Healing. Rev. Susan H. Crampton

Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses
Rte 7 & Kellogg Road (413) 229-8649.
The public is welcome.

Faith Baptist

640 North Main Street (413) 229-0400 Sunday: 9:45am Sunday School; 10:45am Worship Service; 6pm Bible Study; Wednesday: 7pm Mid-week Service; Pastor L.V. Morris.

Old Parish (United Church of Christ)
125 Main Street (413) 229-8173
Sunday: 10am Worship. Rev. Art Kaufman, Pastor

Our Lady of the Valley (Catholic)

Maple Avenue (413) 229-3028; Saturday: 5:30pm Mass; Sunday: Sheffield 7:30am, 9am Masses; Mill River 10:30 Mass. Rev. John S. Lis

Sheffield Chapel (non-denominational)

1970 N. Main Street, www.sheffieldchapel.org, (413) 528-0233 Sunday: 8am & 10:45am Morning Worship; 9:30am Sunday school for all ages. Pastor Chet Howes

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North Street (413) 528-4197 Friday, 8pm & Saturday, 10am. Services are not held every week. Schedules are updated weekly on the answering machine, including special services.

Hevreh of Southern Berkshire

270 State Road (413) 528-6378 Friday: 7:30pm Shabbat Service; Saturday: 10am Shabbat service & Torah study. Rabbi Deborah Zecher, As't Rabbi Andrew Klein

Trinity Lutheran

St. James 352 Main Street (413) 528-1330. Sunday: 9:30am Sunday Worship. Rev. George E. Mayer

Unitarian Universalist Meeting of South Berkshire

St. James, 352 Main Street church
(413) 528-4850; home (413) 528-3106.
Sunday: 5pm. Rev. Kathy Duhon

community NEWS

ELM LECTURE: PAST AND FUTURE GLORY

More than 70 people crowded into the Sheffield Library on May 17 to view slides and listen to Tom Campanella, author of *Republic of Shade: New England and the American Elm*, trace the history of the American elm.

Tom Zetterstrom, founding director of Elm Watch, a local non-profit dedicated to protecting, preserving and restoring the American elm, began by describing how the organization has adopted 118 trees from Williamstown, MA, to Goshen, CT, since its founding in 1999.

Elm Watch Board members John T. Arnold, Frank Garretson, Tom Ingersoll, and Honey Sharp Lippman held up a scroll of color photos of the trees the group has planted throughout the area including at The Mount, the Berkshire Botanical Garden, Hancock Shaker Village, and Ozawa Hall at Tanglewood.

"How Elm Street got (and lost) its trees," was the topic of Tom Campanella's slide show. He demon-

strated with pictures the woeful tale of the elm tree's demise. Modern cities, with their paved roads crowded out trees, while sewers underneath the roads interfered with tree roots, depriving trees of water. Power lines above streets interfered with tree branches and leaves. Then a beetle carrying Dutch Elm Disease arrived, aided by a 1938 hurricane that blew the beetles far and wide.

But the elm is not lost forever. Sheffield's town seal includes a drawing of an elm tree and an inscription "He who plants a tree plants hope." Elm Watch is leading the effort to restore the American elm from Sheffield, the perfect place for such a revival to be happening. It was in Sheffield in 1846 that one of the first village improvement societies formed and sponsored a "tree bee." One thousand elm trees were planted in a double row along Sheffield's Main St. (Route 7).

Campanella characterized the "tree bee" as the first grassroots environmental effort. In other towns, elm trees were planted thanks to one rich benefactor, but here in Sheffield, it was a group of local townspeople that took the initiative to plant elm trees.

Sheffield was also home to the Big Elm, which stood at what's now the junction of Route 7 and Silver St. Campanella believes this elm might have been the largest "totem trees" in the country. "He described how elms, once considered trash trees, became icons. Americans in the 19th century, lacking the rich

cultural history of the Europeans and disconnected from the culture of the Native Americans, looked to nature to discover evidence of their connection to the past. Trees became witnesses to the past, and large elm trees came to symbolize events that took place in their shade. Important town events were planned there.

Why did the tree become so important? A slide of an elm-lined street in New Haven answered the question. The tree endowed a rural aspect to cities. New Haven became a destination for international travelers, including Charles Dickens, who wanted to see the "urban pastoral" created by the "City of Elms." By planting the elm—a giant forest tree—in their cities, Americans were attempting to bring the city and the country together.

Zetterstrom inspired everyone, declaring the elm "unsurpassed in beauty, vigor and size." He encouraged individuals to join the effort to save the elm by adopting one or planting one. The group is demonstrating that it is possible to recapture the beauty of the historic elm-lined streets by treating elms—scientific advances can save existing trees from disease—and planting new ones. The canopies of elm-lined streets in our towns can be recreated; a delightful legacy will be ours, if we make the effort.

For more information, contact Elm Watch at www.elmwatch.org or 413-266-1062.

—Barbara Zheutlin

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THE TREASURE IN OUR OWN BACKYARD

Can it be possible that, tucked in amidst the paved roadways, fertilized lawns, and the mixed blessings of development, in Sheffield's small corner of southwestern Massachusetts, we live near a natural wonder that places us in the company of Kimbe Bay in Papua New Guinea, Canaima National Park in Venezuela, or the forests of Hawaii?

Yes, here in comfortable, familiar Sheffield, we are neighbors to a unique landscape that has over 1,200 species of plants and animals and, incredibly, includes more than 120 rare or endangered species — more than any other area in New England. The Berkshire Taconic Landscape, 120,000 acres encompassing the Taconic Ridge Mountains and their surrounding lowlands in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York, has "as its core one of the largest, healthiest, and most diverse remaining blocks of forest in southern New England," says The Nature Conservancy, which lists Sheffield as one of the Last Great Places on the planet on its website (www.lastgreatplaces.org/berkshire).

The Sheffield part of the story starts with the region's geology and hydrology, which is mainly responsible for the multitude of life forms found here in a relatively small, but intact area. When rain falls on the Taconic Ridge Mountains, it flows through the limestone bedrock and then seeps back up in the wetlands below. Alkaline water, also called "sweet water," is very unusual. Because of it, Sheffield's wetlands, especially the Schenob Brook wetlands, can sustain many rare plants, animals and natural communities. (By contrast, bogs, fed by rainwater only, are acidic and can support few species.) The Conservancy regards the Schenob as one of the highest quality wetlands in the world.

A good place to experience the richness of Sheffield's terrain is by taking a walk on The Nature Conservancy's Drury Trail, off Barnum St.

The trail begins in a rich, north-

ern hardwood forest with white pines, maples, hornbeam, and oaks and an understory of hobblebush and striped maple. Under these is an herb layer of ferns and seasonal wildflowers, some so small that the casual observer will miss them. But the careful walker, with eyes attuned to a hint of color, may spy an orchid the size of a fingernail or the white wood-violet that looks like a tiny bearded iris. Further on, the forest changes and now tall hemlocks dominate, with almost no understory.

Finally, there is the true gem of the region, the mother lode of plants and animals, some so rare that The Nature Conservancy doesn't reveal their names or locations for fear of poachers and collectors coming in. The wetlands, known scientifically as *calcareous seepage wetlands*, contain swamps and several types of fens, which are places where mineral-rich groundwater flows out onto the land surface. The fens lie under black ash and red maple, mossy-cup and burr oaks and bog birches.

The endangered species aren't world famous, like California's giant redwoods or Chinese pandas. Ogden's pondweed is found only here and in a few nearby lakes. Spleenworts and marsh valerian love the calcium-rich earth. Sedges, grass-like plants whose blades have continuous edges rather than joints, are abundant, including several unique varieties, such as the capillary beak sedge, Grey's sedge and the sterile sedge. Some of the endangered species that live in the Berkshire-Taconic landscape have names that make you smile: "drooping speargrass," the "hairy agrimony" (a plant in the rose family), and the "slimy sculpin" (a small fish).

Along the Drury Trail and in other Sheffield swamps and fens, the



Schenob Brook and Mt. Everett

Jefferson salamander and the blue-spotted salamander might be observed creeping on the moist earth. Turtles, including some rare ones, may be glimpsed sunning themselves on a rock ledge or protruding log. The fairy shrimp and Eastern timber rattlesnake may never be seen, but they are there, part of the adhesive that connects all the plants and animals of this rare ecosystem.

Mount Race and Mount Everett, which look down on the swamps and fens, are part of a 36,000-acre uplands forest that is closely linked with the wetlands because that is where the surface and ground water comes from. There, you can find additional plants and animals whose habitats are now severely limited. Gerhardt's underwing moth lives on the summits. A tiny neo-tropical songbird, the worm-eating warbler, visits the uplands for part of the year.

A quick drive or hurried hike through Sheffield may show a lush canopy of trees or the vibrant wildflowers and roadside grasses. But hidden deeper in our town, up on the mountains or into the marshes, is a world-class treasure trove. In their small way, the hillsides, woods and wetlands of Sheffield are an Amazon of diversity. We are fortunate to have this "Last Great Place" in our own backyard.

—Judith Schumer

COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAMS

In 1975, the Children's Health Program started as a traveling well-child clinic. Since then, the services have expanded, so much so that it has changed its name to Community Health Programs, a cluster of four programs:

Community Health Center of the Berkshires offers medical care from immunizations and physical exams to urgent sick visits for clients of all ages, with or without insurance, at 940 S. Main St. in Gt. Barrington. The clinic, on the fourth floor of Fairview Hospital, is open Monday and Thursday 7:30 to 3:30, Tuesday and Wednesday 8:30 to 5:30 and Friday 8:30 to 4:30. For more information, call 528-8580.

South Berkshire Family Network sponsors a variety of educational programs for Children under five years of age and their families across the South Berkshire region. The Family Network is funded by the Massachusetts Dept. of Education, Children's Trust Fund of Massachusetts and Berkshire United Way. It's at 940 S. Main St. in Gt. Barrington and can be reached at 528-0721.

First Steps serves children from birth to three who have or are at risk of any developmental delays including behavior, gross motor or speech. It focuses on helping parents with young children to understand and cope with their child's unique developmental needs. The

BENEFIT FOR FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The 16th Annual Kare Bear Invitational will be held on Wednesday, August 6, at the Egremont Country Club. The public is encouraged to attend and participate in the food drive and the Chrysler Drive for Charity.

Non-perishable food items will be collected and then distributed to the Sheffield Food Assistance Program, the People's Food Pantry, and the Community Action Center. Various Chrysler cars will be available for the public to test drive. Each driver receives a sleeve of golf balls and earns \$5 for the Kare Bear Invitational. Call 528-9622 for more information.

program is funded in part by the Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health. Parents who have questions or concerns can call 528-9311, extension 19, for more information. Offices are at the Community Health Program's headquarters in Russell House at 54 Castle St., Gt. Barrington.

The **Women, Infants and Children (WIC)** program is designed to provide food vouchers, nutrition education and counseling to qualifying families with children under five and pregnant women. WIC is funded by the Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health through a grant from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. South Berkshire WIC administers CHP's privately funded Project Milk, which offers emergency food packages to families who have emergency needs, and sponsors weekly walks. For more information, call 528-0457. Offices are also located in Russell House in Gt. Barrington.



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For further information contact: The Sheffield Historical Society (413) 229-2694. The Trustees of Reservations (413) 298-3239.



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FREE CLINIC FOR SOUTH COUNTY UNINSURED EXPLORED

More than 45 people came to a May 20 meeting to discuss the possibility of establishing a free clinic to serve people in South Berkshire County who have no health insurance. The clinic would follow the model provided by Volunteers in Medicine, whose first clinic was established on Hilton Head Island, S.C., in 1993, and since has been replicated in communities across the U.S.

Marge Hamrell of the Volunteers in Medicine Institute in Burlington, VT, showed a short videotape and described the VIM concept. A Volunteers in Medicine clinic is staffed primarily by retired professionals and lay volunteers and offers free, high quality, well-integrated primary and preventive medical and dental care, as well as mental-health services. The clinics also provide free specialty care for the clinic's patients and for uninsured patients referred by other health care facilities.

According to Elaine B. Panitz, MD, of Sheffield, chair of the project's Initiating Committee, many doctors, dentists, nurses, and mental health professionals, as well as lay volunteers, are eager to give time, energy, and expertise to address the growing problem of the medically uninsured in South County.

In discussion, it was decided that a needs assessment to determine the number of uninsured in Southern Berkshire County should be a first step. The Initiating Committee, which consists of local residents, will seek the expertise and input of existing health care organiza-

tions, including Fairview Hospital, the Community Health Center of the Berkshires, Main Street Human Resources, and other service providers in the community. They will explore with Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce the feasibility of surveying local employers to determine their actual number of uninsured workers. Religious institutions will be asked to determine congregants who are unable to afford healthcare.

It was proposed that a graduate student from Harvard School of Public Health be invited to conduct a focused needs assessment seeking to better define the numbers and needs of the "invisible" uninsured. Simon's Rock College of Bard has offered free housing this summer for the student. Study results would be available this fall.

Although the Volunteers in Medicine Clinic would function as a separate nonprofit entity, it would work closely with existing health care providers. Panitz said, "We envision our community as a better place to live, work, raise a family, and enjoy life, because the health of all residents is optimally supported."

For more information about the Volunteers in Medicine concept, see www.vimclininc.org and www.vimi.org. Or contact Elaine Panitz at: epanmd@yahoo.com.

--Elaine Panitz

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MASTER PLAN UPDATE

If you are interested in the ongoing work of creating a Master Plan for Sheffield or just want to find out what it's all about, come and see. All committee and subcommittee meetings are open to the public. Meeting times are posted at Town Hall and when possible, at the Library. In addition, everyone is encouraged to review or comment on the draft maps and reports that have been generated to-date.

A set of draft reports and maps is available at Town Hall (upstairs on the back table in the Selectmen's meeting room) and at the Library. Please leave the originals at these location so they are available for the next person. The reports are also downloadable from the Master Plan website (see address below). There are additional resources on topics from housing design to the tax benefits of open space at each location as well.

The goal is to review all drafts and make initial recommendations to the Steering Committee by September so they can all be compiled and presented for further input in a series of public forums to be held in the fall. The subcommittees need your help now to make sure that the initial recommendations are as representative as possible.

Status of reports. Ted Brovitz, consultant for the Master Plan, has prepared draft reports on "baseline" conditions and subcommittees are working on draft recommendations for planning in these areas :

- Population & Housing
- Transportation
- Economic Development
- Natural Resources

Still to come, likely in July:

- Open Space & Recreation
- Municipal Facilities
- Land Use

Status of Maps. In addition to the reports, draft maps have been made showing roads, parcels, openspace, trails, wetland and water resources,

zoning, distribution and types of businesses, and other aspects of Sheffield. The historic resources map is being revised as is the agricultural resources maps, but will be returned soon. Each map is a layer of data in a Geographic Information System (GIS) that will allow the Town to update the information as it changes over the years. If you are a visual person, these maps are a great way to explore Sheffield.

See box next page, for committee contact and meeting information and the Master Plan website address.

Economic Development. Meeting twice a month since February, this subcommittee developed a survey sent to 250 plus Sheffield businesses. It held a business forum in April at Dewey Hall in conjunction with the Friendly Union and reviewed the 1994 strategic plan and business park study and Sheffield's zoning bylaws. Current business sites have been mapped.

The subcommittee interviewed the Planning Board chair, building inspector and the executive director of the S. Berkshire Chamber of Commerce; and took field trips to local businesses, including Sheffield Plastics (see story p. 20). There are also plans to talk to the schools, public and private, which are the largest employers in town. The purpose of these interviews is to determine how each sector affects or is affected by the current environment with an eye toward making balanced improvements through recommendations.

Issues that have arisen include the lack of a local labor pool (the unemployment rate in Sheffield is very low); housing; infrastructure - such as a sewer system; and services such as restaurants for business lunches. The subcommittee hopes to examine these factors, understand the dynamics between sectors, explore economic opportunities, and recommend changes that will make for a balanced community.

Housing. The subcommittee has been focused on identifying feasible strategies for encouraging moderately priced housing (not necessarily tied to the State definitions) and housing

in general that would be in keeping with the character and qualities of Sheffield that were rated so high by the community in the survey and public meetings. On June 23, the subcommittee discussed with Susan Witt of the Community Land Trust in the S. Berkshires, the 99-year lease model her organization uses for creating and maintaining moderately priced housing. The key concept is removing the speculative value of the land while allowing the homeowner to grow equity in the house and the land through upkeep and reasonable inflation on the replacement value of the buildings and improvements to the land combined with a mechanism the gives the organization the first option to purchase the house should the homeowner decide to sell.

Facilities, Services & Transportation. This subcommittee is in the process of reviewing the transportation report and is waiting for the facilities report. The committee is looking for additional members with an interest in planning for the future of the Town's facilities (Town Hall, the library, senior center, park, highway garage, etc.), its roads, and the services that the Town provides (fire, police, commissions, boards, etc.).

Land Use, Recreation & Open Space. After a hiatus to give Ted time to prepare th draft reports, this subcommittee is about to start meeting again. Topics will include everything from walking trails and farmland to rural character, hunting, zoning and quality of life issues. The initial meetings will reorient the group and any newcomers, but quickly move on to making recommendations on the natural resource report, updating maps, and crafting a strategy for gaining additional input from the community and addressing each topic to be covered by the end of the summer .

Steering Committee. The committee is reviewing all subcommittee reports and adding members to be prepared to integrate the subcommittee recommendations as they come in and to ensure that a broad-based, well-coordinated and effective team is in place to guide the writing the first draft of the plan in the fall.

COMMITTEE / SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS & CONTACTS

Join a subcommittee or bring ideas and issues to a subcommittee's attention without joining. Contact subcommittee chair, or Ted Brovitz as listed below or c/o Town Hall, P.O. Box 325, Sheffield, MA 01257.

- ♦ **Economic Development.**

Co-chairs: Don Ward (229-9023) and Sharon Gregory (229-2717 or sharongregory1@cs.com). Next meeting: Mon., 7/7, 5pm, Town Hall room.

- ♦ **Facilities, Services & Transportation.** Anna James (229-3096 or arjames@bcn.net). Call for meeting dates.

- ♦ **Housing.** Chair: David West (229-7727). Next meeting, 7/14, 7:30pm, Town Hall.

- ♦ **Land use, Open Space & Recreation.** Chair: Allison Lassoe. (lassoe@worldnet.att.net or 229-8839). Call for meeting dates.

- ♦ **Steering Committee.** Chair: Kathy Orlando (wildkato@aol.com or 229-8789). Next meetings: 7/21 & 8/28 4:30pm, Town Hall.

- ♦ **Consultant** Ted Brovitz, project manager, attends most subcommittee meetings. He can be reached at tbrovitz@dufresne-henry.com or 617-426-9716. He will also hold office hours 7/21 & 8/28, 2-4:30pm at Town Hall to answer questions or review any information members of the public may have.

- ♦ **Other: Farm Forum.** Tentatively scheduled for July 21 7:30pm. Master Plan booths at the Sheffield 9/6, 3-7pm.

- ♦ Check the Master Plan web site for the latest: www.dufresne-henry.com/Sheffield.

MONDAY MORNING PAINT-OUTS

Join fellow artists painting Monday mornings 9-noon in beautiful sunny settings in the Southern Berkshires.

Artists be painting at locations that support the theme of this year's September Celebration show – food – and next year's Housatonic River Shows.

Locations and dates are: Housatonic– Bridge over the River on Rte 183. 7/7 & 14; Sheffield – Bob Kelly's Farm, Hewins St. 7/24, 28 & 8/4; Berkshire Botanical Garden – Rte 183/102. 8/11, 18 & 25

The group has been offered many other locations. If you are interested in weekend paint-outs or just need a spot to paint on your own, contact Bill Connell at (413) 229-9977. Arrangements can also be made to paint the River in September and October.

SEPTEMBER SHEFFIELD CELEBRATION ARTISTS PREPARE FOR SEPTEMBER CELEBRATION ART SHOW

The theme this year is Food: Grown, Cooked and Eaten — Submissions can range from farm landscapes and still-life of produce to prepared food. The show is juried and open to all fine art media. There is no fee or size restrictions (within reason). The Show will once again be held at the Library, co-sponsored by the Friends of the Library, Sheffield Art League and Sheffield Association. 30% of the sales will go to benefit the library.

Paintings will be received 9/4 from 3-5pm. Show hours will be Fridays 9/5 & 12, 4-7pm to coincide with the Farmers Market; 9/6, 10am –7pm to coincide with the Old Parish Quilt Show and Sheffield Fair; 9/6, 10am-4pm; and 9/13 & 14, 10am-4pm.

There will be an artist's reception Saturday 9/6 from 5-7pm during the Sheffield Fair.

FAIR ON THE GREEN

The Sheffield Fair is Saturday, September 6 from 3-7pm, with music, artisans, local cottage industries, hayrides and activities for the kids, classic and muscle cars and — in keeping with Fair tradition and the Art Show theme – lots of great food and food purveyors! Favorites from the last two years will be back but there is room for more new attractions, so if you, your business or your organization would like to participate, contact co-chairs Kathy Orlando (229-8789) or Nancy Kriegel (229-7703). Whether your specialty is food or furniture or you would just like to lend a helping hand, please give them a call.

One of the Celebration's new events this year are plans for a dance at Dewey Memorial Hall.

And don't forget the Old Parish Quilt Show, 9/5 & 6 and the Farmers Market 9/5 & 12.

Look for details closer to the event in the *Sheffield Times* and local media outlets.



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POLICE DEPARTMENT

JULY 4TH EFFORT TO CURB DRINKING & DRIVING

The Sheffield Police Department will join more than 290 Massachusetts law enforcement agencies in support of a nationwide mobilization to reduce impaired driving. Spearheaded by the Governor's Highway Safety Bureau, the effort will combine public information campaigns with extra traffic enforcement. To aid the effort, the Sheffield department will receive a new breath alcohol testing system funded by the safety bureau.

"The public can help us by staying sober behind the wheel, buckling up, obeying posted speed limits, and reporting suspected drunk drivers," said Chief James McGarry. "If you are hosting a party, offer non-alcoholic beverages and do not tolerate underage drinking. If you are heading to an event and plan to drink, be sure to select a sober designated driver or plan to use a taxi or mass transit."

Of the 277 motor vehicle-related deaths in Massachusetts in 2001, almost half involved alcohol.

TRANSFER STATION HOURS
Tuesdays and Fridays: 1pm-4pm
Saturdays: 8am-4pm
Sundays: 8:30am-2pm

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

MAILBOX PLACEMENT

This winter the Highway Department experienced some difficulty in plowing and ensuring that there was sufficient travel area clear for cars to safely pass each other or pedestrians, due to mailboxes that are installed too close to the road. Road right-of-ways often grow up and blend into lawns, so unfortunately the edge of the road is not necessarily a good guide in determining placement of the box.

Placement of a mailbox may seem a trivial matter, but it actually can be dangerous to drivers (especially with the windows open), bikers and pedestrians as boxes tend to be at head or chest level.

If you are unsure about your box placement, please check with Town Hall or the Highway Department for guidance about how far back and where the post and box should be.

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ASSESSORS & COLLECTORS

Watch for tax bills: Fiscal 2004 preliminary tax bills are sent at the end of June for the August 1 and October 1, 2003, payments. Transfer station tax bills will be sent out by the end of summer.

Deadline reminder: Planning ahead - Chapter land applications must be in the Assessors' office on or before October 1, 2003.

TOWN CLERK

New Sheffield residents: If you've just moved into town, we would like to encourage you to stop by the Town Hall and fill out a Town census form, register to vote, and license your dog, if you have one.

Dog owners: Licenses for 2003 are overdue. A \$25 penalty per dog is now in effect.

***On a personal note:** My name is Felecie Joyce. I am the new Town Clerk of Sheffield. I am looking forward to serving the residents of Sheffield, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who have welcomed me into my new position. I would also like to thank my predecessor, Helen Johnston, for all of her guidance, and I wish Helen the very best upon her retirement.*

—Felecie O. Joyce, Town Clerk
Office hours: Mon.-Fri., 9am to 4pm.
Telephone: 229-8752

HOME HAZARDOUS WASTE DISPOSAL

Used motor oil and oil-based paints can be disposed of at these times and locations:

Sat., July 26, 9am-noon. Great Barrington Transfer Station, Route 7, across from Monument Mountain High School.

Sat., Aug. 16, 9-11am. Otis Transfer Station, West Center Rd.

Wed., Aug. 20, 4:30-6:30pm. Lenox Department of Public Works, 275 Main St./Route 7A, across from MassHighway offices.

Other household hazardous waste may be brought on Sat., July 19, 9am-noon by appointment to the Stockbridge Recycling Center, 1 West Stockbridge Road (Route 102 West), about one mile west of Red Lion Inn. Examples of these items are: paint thinners and solvents, pesticides, gasoline and drain cleaners; products that contain mercury, such as fever thermometers and the button batteries found in watches and hearing aids; and rechargeable cell-phone and tool batteries. Alkaline batteries can be disposed of in household trash. Residents who bring in a mercury fever thermometer will receive a free non-mercury replacement.

Latex paint won't be collected at any of these events. Dried latex paint can be disposed of with regular trash.

For more information or to register for these collections, call the Center for Ecological Technology at 800-238-1221.

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Art Show 9/5-7 & 12-14**

Quilt Show 9/5-9/6

Sheffield Fair 9/6

Farmers' Market 9/5 & 9/12

BOARD OF SELECTMEN: EXCERPTS FROM MEETING MINUTES

3/24—The Board decided to obtain a copy of a proposal from Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation for the purpose of considering whether to put it on the warrant for a future Town Meeting. The Board was updated by Town Administrator Robert Weitz on the proposed construction of a new senior center.

It decided not to exercise the Town's option under Chapter 61 to purchase Merryfield Farm, on Hickey Hill Rd.

The Board considered an application by Thomas and Beverly Kradel for a permit for the excavation of 20 acres of land on the south side of East Stahl Rd. and scheduled a public hearing on this application for April 28. (see update and reprinted conditions at right)

The Board approved a request by Highway Superintendent Ron

Bassett to close Guilder Hollow Rd. to trucks because of mud conditions.

A letter regarding the tuition to be paid by the Town for vocational education for two students in the amount of \$13,342 was read.

3/31—The Board met to conduct interviews to screen eight candidates for the Town Clerk position. Following the interviews, it was decided to ask four to return for a final round of interviews. Two candidates withdrew their applications, leaving two finalists.

4/7—The Board conducted the final interviews of candidates for the Town Clerk position.

June Wolfe updated the Board on the Farmers' Market's 2003 season.

The Board heard comments by Jim Larkin on the Kradel excavation permit application to the effect that confusion and delays might result from action on this application at the same time as amendments to the excavation bylaw were being discussed. He also stated that excavation sites have been used for farming after completion of the excavation operations.

4/10—After being informed by the Town Administrator that he had checked the references of Felecie Joyce as an applicant for the Town Clerk position, the Board acted to appoint her to the position.

The Sheffield Tree Project asked for and received the Board's permission to plant trees, one near the Police Station and invited the Board to an Arbor Day Celebration.

The Board scheduled a public hearing on the proposed transfer of the liquor license of the Stagecoach Hill Inn.

The Board voted to appoint the Dufresne-Henry firm as its consultant in connection with its consideration of the Kradel excavation permit.

SPECIAL UPDATE: KRADEL GRAVEL EXCAVATION PERMIT APPROVED

At its June 16 meeting, the Board of Selectmen approved the application of Thomas and Beverly Kradel to open a gravel excavating operation on their East Stahl Rd. property in conjunction with local excavating contractor Joe Wilkinson.

Over the course of several public meetings and in written correspondence many residents spoke both in favor of and in opposition to the application. Concerns — based on bad experiences with other pits in the area -- centered around neighborhood quality of life, water quality, noise, health, environmental, property values issues and what will happen to the property after the site is mined out. Those in favor cited the ongoing need for gravel, particularly for septic systems, that Wilkinson would be using the materials for his own operations, and that as a local contractor he would be accessible to address concerns should they arise.

Sheffield's Earth Removal By-Law governing the application for and granting of permits for all earth removal and mining operations -- including gravel pits -- pre-dates and is separate from the Zoning By-Laws and is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Selectmen rather than the Planning Board.

While conditions were placed on the permit [reprinted verbatim p.17] to address some of the concerns raised during the hearing process, residents remained uneasy about the effects of the pit. In response, the Board indicated that should problems arise, residents should let the Board know so the Board could investigate and address the issues with the applicant.

**Televised Board of Selectmen's
meetings can also be seen
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CONDITIONS TO
EXCAVATION PERMIT ISSUED TO
THOMAS AND BEVERLY KRADEL
JUNE 16, 2003

1. Approval shall be contingent upon the submitted Erosion and Sediment Control plan, including all seed mixes, application rates, fertilizer application and mulch or fiber blanket application for temporary and reclamation work.

2. All topsoil stripped from each work area shall be completely retained onsite for use in reclamation of each area. Each temporary topsoil stockpile shall be immediately seeded with an erosion control mix (suitable for stabilizing droughty soils) and shall be maintained until used for reclamation. No topsoil is to be removed from the property as a result of this operation.

3. Excavation details and elevations shall be reported four (4) times per season during active mining. The reporting shall be made on the approved project site plan by a Registered Professional Engineer, and shall include the limits of clearing, limits of excavation, and grades of excavation. The narrative portion of the report shall also detail the approximate timing of the phased reclamation. All elevations shall be based on the permanent benchmark identified on the approved site plan. The permittee shall identify the period of active mining so that there is a definitive period within which the Town should be receiving the four reports.

4. A performance bond or other security shall be submitted to the Board of Selectmen prior to commencement of the project. Upon the completion of removal from any one phase, the applicant shall complete stabilization and revegetation activities as detailed in the Application. Initiation of the next phase shall be contingent on the receipt of a signed letter from the Board of Selectmen signifying the adequate closure of the previous phase per the approved plans and Application. At this point after each phase, a partial release of the performance bond may be considered by the Board. Final release of the bond will be contingent upon complete site stabilization.

5. Saplings found within areas to be cleared shall be re-planted in those buffer areas where the existing vegetation is found to be unsuitable to provide an adequate visual, noise,

and/or dust barrier as determined by the Board of Selectmen.

6. Applicant shall provide for the use of water and/or calcium chloride for dust control if a problem is identified and documented by project abutters during the mining operation. The need for and frequency of use of these dust control measures shall be determined by the Board of Selectmen.

7. All work shall be in accordance with the Town of Sheffield Excavation By-Law and all plans and documents submitted to the Board of Selectmen, including all amendments and supplemental information submitted subsequent to the original filing of March 20, 2003. These include, but are not limited to:

- Application and submittal document:
- *Proposed Gravel Pit*", Prepared by White Engineering, Inc of Pittsfield, MA, submitted March 20, 2003
- *"Earth Removal Permitting Plan - Existing Conditions"*, Prepared for Thomas H. and Beverly A. Kradel by White Engineering, Inc., dated March 19, 2003.
- *"Earth Removal Permitting Plan - Proposed Site Plan"*, Prepared for Thomas H. and Beverly A. Kradel by White Engineering, Inc., dated March 19, 2003, as modified April 28, 2003
- Memorandum from Edward G. McCormick dated June 2, 2003, Re: *Additional Information Re: Kradel Excavation Permit*.

8. During the clearing of trees from the site, all refueling of chainsaws and other portable machinery shall be done over absorbent matting designed to absorb any spills or overfills.

9. Following excavation, in addition to all other provisions contained in the application plans, topsoil shall be spread to a minimum uniform depth of four inches (4"). It is the responsibility of the applicant to take any and all practical measures to ensure that topsoil depths and measures of topsoil/seed protection will provide for a suitable vegetative cover on the reclamation areas.

10. Water table levels shall be monitored on a quarterly basis with the results of such monitoring provided to the Town or its designee. If average high water table depths (based on quarterly data from two consecutive years) prove to be higher

than previously calculated, the Town shall be notified and new excavation elevations shall be calculated and submitted to the Town. Excavations will then be limited to the maintenance of four-foot (4') separation from the new high average water table elevation.

11. The site shall be subject to periodic monitoring, by the Town or its agent for compliance with the Excavation By-law, submitted plans and documents and these conditions.

12. A performance bond shall be posted in an amount equal to \$35,143 and such performance bond shall be recalculated on an annual basis in an amount equal to or exceeding the cost of reclamation as determined by the Town's engineering consultant as derived from the most recent edition of *"Site Work & Landscape Cost Data"* published by R.S. Means Company, Inc.

13. The applicant shall reimburse the Town of Sheffield for the cost of up to one permit compliance monitoring per year performed by the Town's engineering consultant. The reimbursable compliance monitoring is to occur after any four (4) acre area has been mined and a two (2) acre area has been reclaimed.

14. All excavated materials shall be delivered directly from the permitted site to the site where the material will be ultimately utilized. No off-site stockpiling of excavated materials at any intermediate site shall be allowed.

15. A "Stop" sign and "No Right Turn" sign shall be maintained at the end of the site access road where it enters East Stahl Road.

16. Except in the case of an emergency, declared by the Board of Selectmen, no excavation activities under this permit shall occur on Saturdays.

17. This permit shall be valid for three (3) years from the date of issuance, unless revoked by the Board of Selectmen under the provisions of §102-15 of the Excavation By-law.

18. Any spillage of fuel or lubricants shall be addressed through the provisions of the Massachusetts Contingency Plan, Chapter 21E of the Massachusetts General Laws, and any applicable federal hazardous material regulations.

19. No screening, washing or other processing of excavated materials shall be allowed under this permit.

village GREEN

ULLRICH STEPS DOWN AS CHIEF

After 11 years, John Ullrich has stepped down as chief of the Sheffield Fire Dept. Former deputy chief, Rick Boardman, has assumed his place. John will re-main on the squad, becoming co-deputy chief with Bob Beham. John has been a member of the Department for 22 years, 21 of them as an officer. He became chief in 1992.

Reflecting on his decade-plus service as chief, John noted that they "were terrific times," but also had heavy responsibilities. He has open admiration for his replacement, Chief Boardman.

By any standard, the Ullrich years were unusually productive for the Dept. In just the past eight months its membership has increased from 29 to 33; men who save every Wednesday evening for training and then are available 24/7—whenever there is an emergency.

Brian Ovitt, a 38-year member and "dean" of the department, was especially enthusiastic. The department "is in really good shape," he affirmed. "John was a very good chief." He noted, in particular, that John was instrumental in the development of the radio room. But he also credits him with doing a lot for the firemen, unifying, upgrading, and numbering their gear. "Best of all, he really has had the Fire Department at heart."

On behalf of the people of Sheffield, John Ullrich, thanks for your leadership!

FIRE DEPARTMENT LOG

--Rick Boardman, Chief

- 4/15 - Brush fire. Alarm time, 4:00pm. In service, 4:35pm.
- 4/15 - Brush fire. Alarm time, 4:20pm. In service, 5:38pm.
- 4/15 - Mutual aid for GBFD. Alarm time, 9:10 pm; In service, 11:05pm.
- 4/16 - Alarm at SBRSD. Alarm time, 2:45 pm; In service, 3:05pm.
- 4/17 - Grass fire. Alarm time, 5:00pm. In service, 5:45pm.
- 4/19 - Brush fire. Alarm time, 12:35pm; In service, 1:09pm.
- 4/21 - Brush fire. Alarm time, 12:00pm; In service 1:00pm
- 4/25 - Brush Fire, Alarm time, 12:18 pm; In service, 12:52pm
- 5/2 - Alarm. Alarm time, 3:00pm; In service, 3:30pm
- 5/8 - Alarm. Alarm time, 10:18am; In service, 10:40am
- 5/14 - Alarm. Alarm time, 6:40am; In service, 7:15am
- 5/17 - Alarm Berkshire School. Alarm time, 3:18pm; In service, 4:00pm
- 5/17 - Alarm SBRSD. Alarm time, 4:30pm; In service 4:55pm
- 5/18 - Fire alarm. Alarm time, 1:25pm; In service, 1:45 pm.
- 5/19 - Alarm at SBRSD. Alarm time, 8:07am; In service, 8:36am.
- 5/20 - Alarm at SBRSD . Alarm time, 9:10am; In service, 9:28am.
- 5/21 - Alarm at Option Institute. Alarm time, 10:25am. In service, 10:35am.
- 5/22 - Car accident. Alarm time, 3:45pm; In service, 5:17pm.
- 5/30 - Alarm at Berkshire School. Alarm time, 12:15am; In service, 12:40am.
- 6/5 - Alarm at Berkshire School. Alarm time, 6:00am; In service, 6:20am.
- 6/6 - Alarm at Sheffield Plastics. Alarm time, 1:35pm; In service, 1:50pm.
- 6/9 - Search. Alarm time, 5:15pm; In service, 6:25pm.

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Ears On A Beate - World Premiere

July 30 - August 10:

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Once Upon a Mattress

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July 30 - August 10:

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SHEFFIELD ART LEAGUE

Scholarship winners. Aaron Garmon and Jenna Marchione are the winners of the Sheffield Art League's 28th Student Art Scholarship Competition. Aaron will receive \$1,500 as first-prize winner and Jenna \$1,000 for second prize. Both students are graduates of Mount Everett High School. Martha Thompson, an art teacher at Mount Everett, sponsored their nominations, which were announced at a reception at the Bushnell-Sage Memorial Library on 4/26. Garmon has been accepted at the Cleveland Institute of Art for his college study, while Marchione is still in the process of making her final choice of college for the fall.

The scholarship started with a gift from the late Jim Masson in memory of his wife Ruth, both members of the Sheffield Art League. The scholarship has continued with funds donated by local businesses and current SAL members. Local high school art students are sponsored by their teachers to submit four pieces for the juried competition. Local artists and members of the SAL serve as the jury. This year, they were Bill Connell of Sheffield, Martha Platt of Salisbury and Shellie Schneider of Port Washington. Garmon and Marchione have been invited to exhibit one of their entries in the Sheffield Art League's Members Show this summer.

RIVER SUMMER' TO CELEBRATE HOUSATONIC

The Sheffield Art League, in conjunction with over 15 Berkshire-based conservancy and community groups including the Sheffield Land Trust and Sheffield Association, is planning an art and environment event called "River Summer 2004." In addition to celebrating in images the beauty of the Housatonic River, the venture is seen as an opportunity to raise awareness of the river's importance in linking communities up and down its banks. Although the emphasis will be on the river as inspiration for artists and photographers, the summer's events will also bring the artists together with conservationists, art historians, educators, and other interested people of all ages in celebrating the Housatonic River as a treasured natural resource and a literary and artistic inspiration of national significance.

River Summer 2004 will be a summer-long series of art paint-outs, lectures, and demonstrations by prominent river artists and juried art shows sponsored by the SAL. There will also be a host of river events sponsored by river conservancy

groups. A river festival day hosted by the Norman Rockwell Museum will launch a month-long exhibit at the Rockwell Museum of prize-winning river art from three SAL summer juried art shows. SAL is encouraging artists in the Housatonic corridor to begin painting or photographing the river now and to enter the 2004 art shows.

A full-color booklet is being produced called "The Housatonic River: Past Views and Future Visions," with historic and contemporary paintings and photographs of the river and essays on the river's role in art, its history as a spoiled resource, and its future revitalization.

A portion of the money raised during the events and booklet sales will go toward projects to benefit the community's enjoyment of the river. For further information about River Summer 2004, call or e-mail Nancy Goldberger (413-274-3809, nangold@simons-rock.edu) or Bill Connell (413-229-9977, themusesgarden@netscape.net). For information about the Art League, visit the website: www.sheffieldartleague.org.

Painter of the month for July. Celebrated artist Jack Nodiff has been chosen as the SAL's Painter of the Month for July. The ongoing exhibition at BankNorth on Main St. in Gt. Barrington features the works of local artists selected by the SAL.

Nodiff has a home and studio in Stockbridge, where he creates the landscapes, seascapes and beach scenes that are his specialty. His works have been exhibited at the Welles Gallery in Lenox, as well as galleries in New York and locally.

Summer art show. SAL's Annual Summer Juried Art Show will be held at Dewey Memorial Hall, 7/3-8/3. Opening reception and awards: 7/3, 4pm. Open Thurs. to Mon. 10am-5pm (closed Tues. and Wed.).

Watercolor demonstration and workshop. The SAL is sponsoring a demonstration and reception by Mel Stabin, watercolorist and author, from 7 to 9:30pm at the Bushnell-Sage Library on July 30. SAL Members free, non-members \$5. On July 31 to August 2, Stabin will lead a watercolor workshop at the library from 10am to 4pm. SAL Members \$180, non-members \$200. Reservations required; call 413-528-1612.

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SHEFFIELD PLASTICS: LEADING WORLD MARKETS

In the 54 years since it was founded, Sheffield Plastics has become one of the leading manufacturers in the world of high-performance sheet plastic. Polycarbonate sheet plastic, one of the products made in the two plants in town, is an optically clear plastic with extreme resistance to breakage. That makes it ideal for use as windows in schools, institutions, and even construction equipment. The sheets are also used to manufacture signs like those used by Mobil/Exxon and Burger King, and they can be found on the fronts of almost every vending machine.

Sheffield Plastics also makes a copolyester sheet plastic called Vivak, used to make many of the displays, store fixtures, and interior signs in Walmart, Sears, Hallmark, and other stores. Vivak is also used for packaging foods and drugs.

The company, with factories on Salisbury Rd. and Silver St., is now owned by the German-based Bayer Corp., a \$33 billion company whose products include chemicals as well as aspirin and other health-care products.

Sheffield Plastics was founded in 1949 by two former General Electric employees, Harold Pelton and Richard Stover, starting in the building on Salisbury Rd., which was once used to can chicken. The company's first product was plastic diffusers (or lenses) for fluorescent lighting fixtures. It eventually

diversified into the extrusion of polycarbonates and acrylic sheets for safety glazing. In 1957, Stover sold his interest in the company and started Custom Extrusion, Inc., which focused on making plastic into various shapes rather than flat sheets.

Dutch State Mines Co. (DSM) bought Sheffield Plastics in 1980. To keep up with the expanding demand for sheet plastic, the Silver St. facility, originally bought as a warehouse in the 1970s, was expanded and renovated to be used as a second manufacturing location in 1990.

By then, Sheffield Plastics had become one of the largest customers of resin (in the form of plastic pellets) produced by the Bayer Corp. That led Bayer to purchase the company in April 1999, beating out GE, the world's other major producer of resin. Currently, Sheffield Plastics has customers in 256 locations throughout the world. To keep up with the growing demand, Sheffield Plastics will soon need to increase its capacity. Bayer has decided to maintain the two facilities in Sheffield at their current size and expand operations at another Bayer-owned plant in the Midwest.

The extrusion process in action

Dennis Duff, president of Sheffield Plastics, recently invited members of the Sheffield Master

Plan's economic development subcommittee and a volunteer reporter for the Sheffield Times for a two-hour presentation and a tour of the plant. Accompanying Duff were Bill Kistler, vice president for operations, Stephen Rada, plant manager, and Linda Berard, human resources manager.

Our tour began at the silos in back of the Silver St. facility, where the resin pellets are delivered by railroad cars. Because there is no rail stop at the Salisbury Rd. plant, pellets used in that plant must be transferred by truck, where they are also stored in silos.

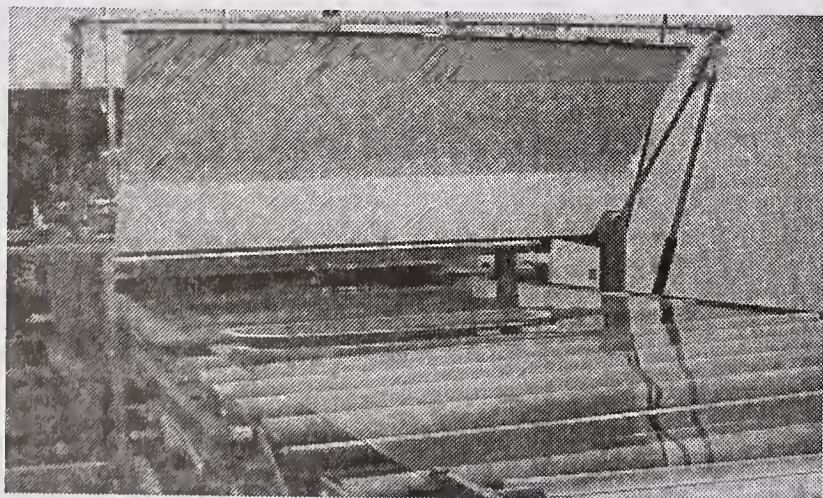
Using a vacuum system, the plastic pellets are conveyed through tubes from the storage silos into dryers for moisture to be removed. They then pass into large blenders, where various resins are added to give the plastic color, resistance to ultraviolet light and other product enhancements, and into a long barrel, where they are heated and melted.

The molten plastic is pushed through an adjustable die opening onto rotating chrome rolls, forming plastic sheets 6 to 8 feet wide and up to 450 feet long, with thicknesses ranging from .02 to .50 inches — depending on what the customer has ordered. The sheets are cooled, cut to size, and carefully lifted and packaged. The packages are trucked from the Salisbury Rd. and Silver St. plants directly to customers or to warehouses for distribution throughout the world.

A clean manufacturing process

Plastic is a very stable material. The resin pellets are nontoxic, and concerns occasionally voiced by neighbors about carcinogenic effects have no basis in fact, both Kistler and Rada assured us.

They pointed out that plastic extrusion is a very clean manufacturing process. It releases no air emissions, nor are there any hazardous materials used on-site. Plastic sheets that show imperfections are cut up and fed back into the system, so 99



In the extrusion process, pellets of resin are melted down. Molten plastic is pushed through an adjustable die opening onto rotating chrome rolls, forming plastic sheets.

percent of the resin eventually goes into finished products. Most of the remaining 1 percent is sold to recyclers, with the remainder—primarily floor dust—going into normal trash.

Sheffield Plastics is below emission levels for all the listed hazardous air pollutants. In addition, the company has worked to control noise levels for its neighbors by not taking rail deliveries on nights or Sundays and by insulating the tubing in the system to dampen noise and vibrations.

Staff and community relations

According to Duff, "The success of Sheffield Plastics in large part is due to the quality of the employees—people make all the difference." In our tour through the building, it was clear that there is a good relationship between management and the production staff.

The company currently has 160 employees, of which just 12 live in town. About half the rest live in nearby communities such as Great

Barrington, Housatonic, Pittsfield, Lee, Lenox and Canaan, and the rest come from farther afield. The extremely low rate of unemployment in Sheffield (currently less than 3 percent) has made it hard to find local workers, as does the lack of local services such as restaurants and the limited availability of housing in Sheffield.

Production jobs at Sheffield Plastics start at \$11.11 an hour, increasing to about \$15 with experience. There's a premium for night shifts. Employees on the production floor work 12-hour shifts (5am to 5pm or 5pm to 5am) in alternating 36-hour and 48-hour weeks.

Sheffield Plastics is currently the second largest taxpayer in Sheffield (after Massachusetts Electric), scheduled to pay slightly more than \$37,000 in real estate taxes for the calendar year 2003 (as calculated from Town Hall records).

Duff says, "Sheffield Plastics and the town of Sheffield have grown up together." He looks forward to working with the town and the

community on mutually beneficial goals. Recent donations by the company to Mt. Everett School have included scholarships, equipment for students to take apart and study, plastic material for the construction of tanks and filters for a high school aquiculture project, and material for a soon-to-be-built greenhouse. Sheffield Plastics provided the plastic that covers the announcement case at Dewey Hall, and it gave material for use in making the scenery for a recent regional production of *Earth Angels*. In addition, the company has made contributions to the Sheffield Historical Society, the United Way, and other local benefits.

Neighbors are invited to participate in Sheffield Plastics' annual employee health fair, which is held at the Salisbury Rd. plant. Management is also considering a community open house, which would include a presentation, a tour of one or both of the facilities and a question-answer period.

—Ellen Rowntree

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NEW PIZZA IN TOWN

Lou's Palermo Pizza Restaurant has recently opened behind the Sheffield Pub on Route 7. There's a cozy, personable, family dining area where customers can see their pizza coming out of the oven. Or you can order a pie to go. Delivery is available.

Louis Strano makes his Palermo pizza according to an old family recipe. In the early 1930s, Angelina and Louis Strano brought their recipe to the United States from Palermo, Sicily. They opened The Palermo Family Restaurant in Torrington, Conn., where it thrived for over 40 years.

Lou was named for his grandfather and has fond memories of growing up in his grandparent's restaurant in the days when a large pizza cost \$1.25. Wanting to carry on his family's tradition, Lou, with the help of his mother and father,

Josephine and Joseph Strano, opened The Palermo II Cafe on East Main St. in Torrington in 1980.

Now, in 2003, Lou is proud to bring his family's true Italian pizza to the Berkshire area. Lou explains that his pizza is baked like no other. It is his grandparent's double baking method that makes all the difference. First the pizza is sauced with Lou's famous sauce and then put in the oven for a first bake. When it comes out of the oven, the fresh toppings and mozzarella cheese are added. The pizza is then put back in the oven for a second bake. This allows the crust to have the unmistakable "Palermo crunch" without being overcooked. Lou's daughter, Jennie, the fourth generation of Strano pizza makers, will tell you, "Nothing stands up like a Palermo Pizza!" Jennie can often be seen at the restaurant giving her Dad a hand.

In addition to pizza, Lou offers a variety of appetizers, including made-to-order buffalo wings, along with sandwiches, subs, salads, burgers and chicken pot pie. Lou will soon be expanding the menu to include some fried seafood dinners and pasta specials. He plans to run specials on certain days of the week.

The space had been vacant for two years when Lou began cleaning in April. It was quite a task, but it is now spotless and Lou works hard to keep it that way. He enjoys meeting his customers and prefers to know them by name. He looks forward to seeing you.

Lou's Palermo Pizza Restaurant is open Tues. to Sat., 11:30am to 9pm and Sun. 1 to 8pm (closed Mon.). Hours may be expanded for the summer. The entrance is on the side of the building. There's a take-out window (229-9900) and ample parking at the rear of the building.

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Family Day will be held on Sat., July 12, from noon to 5pm. The Dan Raymond House and the Col. Ashley House will offer a number of hands-on activities, demonstrations, and tours. This year's focus is on everyday plants, which were such a significant part of life in early America. Discussions of the plants used in cooking will be offered at the Dan Raymond House, and the smokehouse will be in operation. Attendees will be able to go on a plant walk on the grounds and make an herbal sachet. Among the activities at the Col. Ashley house will be the making of cornhusk dolls. Admission: Adults half the usual price, children & members free.

Revolutionary Period Tours will be offered on Sat. July 26 and 8/23. The tours begin at the Dan Raymond House at 1:30pm. What was the material life of our founding families really like? The exploration begins viewing a number of 18th-century documents from the Mark Dewey Research Center archives. The group then visits objects now on view in both the Dan Raymond and Col.

Ashley houses. Space is limited; members free, non-members \$5. Reservations; 229-2694.

Tourism of the past. The Society's project *Spend a Summer in Sheffield & Environs: The Tourism Trade in the Railroad Era* encompasses a talk, an exhibit, and a publication on tourism. The Society, as the recipient of the Scholars in Residence project, a grant cosponsored by the Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities and the Bay State Historical League, has been able to study in depth over 100 years of local tourism. The funds provided a stipend for local historian and author Bernard Drew to research the topic in the Society's archives. Among the many topics covered were the construction of the Housatonic Railroad in the 1840s, the growth of country inns and taverns, the advent of farm and home boarding facilities, and the popularity of natural landmarks, among them Sage's Ravine and The Dome.

To reserve your copy of Drew's book, call the Society at 229-2694. The exhibition will open at the Old Stone Store with a reception on 7/19 at 2pm and will remain on view until

the end of August. Drew will speak at the opening reception. The talk will be given outside unless it rains, so bring your lawn chair and see the new garden area of the Stone Store. Refreshments will be served.

Pig roast. Join Sheffield Historical Society members for a Pig Roast, Sat., 8/23, at the American Legion on Rt. 7 in Sheffield. Afternoon activities include marvelous food, entertainment by Tom Ingersoll, artisan's booths, and more. Scott Ryan will be in charge of serving up the pig roast. Tickets: adults \$15, children \$8; children under 8 free.

The Society is taking reservations for artisans who wish to operate a booth during the festivities. Call the office for more information.

The Old Stone Store, on Main Street (Rte 7), is open Sat. 10am-2pm. & Sun. 11am-3pm. Tours of the Dan Raymond House are available by appointment year-round and, Thurs.- Sat. 11am-4pm. The Mark Dewey Research Center is open Mon. & Fri. 1:30-4pm and by appointment. For further information on programs, contact the Society, 159-161 Main Street, P.O. Box 747, Sheffield, MA 01257, (413) 229-2694 or email us at shs@sheffieldhistory.org.



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Saturday, July 19 at 8:00 p.m.

Haydn - *Lord Nelson Mass*; Walton - *Belshazzar's Feast*
Conductor: John Alexander, Pacific Chorale

Saturday, July 26 at 8:00 p.m.

Barber - *Prayers of Kierkegaard*
Vaughan Williams, *A Sea Symphony*
Conductor: Robert Page, Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh

Saturday, August 2 at 8:00 p.m.

Bach - *St. Matthew Passion* (in German)
Conductor: David Hill, Bach Choir of London

Saturday, August 9 at 8:00 p.m.

Bach - *Cantata BWV 79*
Mendelssohn - *Lobgesang* (in German)
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THE FRIENDLY UNION: SHEFFIELD AT ITS BEST

The Sheffield Friendly Union, formally known as the Sheffield Friendly Union Library Association, began in 1871 as a literary, educational and social organization, a precursor of the lyceum and atheneum movements that swept the country in the last decades of the 19th century. It was the idea of the Reverend Orville Dewey, a national leader in the Unitarian movement, who was born on the family farm in Sheffield in 1794 and maintained a local home during his lifetime. The Friendly Union's stated goals were "...to increase kindly feelings and promote intelligence and cheerfulness." With the help of daughter Mary and son Charles, Dewey's plan was brought to fruition and in 1887 the Friendly Union's stability was guaranteed by the gift of its permanent home, Dewey Memorial Hall.

Before Dewey Hall was built, the group met on the second floor of the former Sheffield Academy, a structure owned by merchant, Cyrus French. It is now Silk's Variety on the Sheffield Green.

The young organization met with immediate success. The first season began with 45 members but by its end the number had grown to about 250, a figure it continued to maintain for the next 100 years. In need of larger space, it moved to the second floor of the general store of

Eugene J. Vosburgh on the east side of Route 7, now 116 Main Street. Eventually an even larger space was required and an agreement was reached with Vosburgh to enlarge his hall. Sixty dollars was advanced to him for renovations, the sum to be applied toward rent, for a minimum of 16 Friday evenings per year, at \$3 per meeting. The sum included heat and lighting.

The Friendly Union met in the winter months, with programs designed to achieve its goals of promoting intelligence and cheerfulness. A typical season included six to nine lectures, two or three readings by professional elocutionists, several local readers and one or two dramatic performances, plus a number of concerts.

The activities covered a vast range of practical and esoteric subjects. Some random, early examples were a lecture titled "Bald Heads, Inside and Out," another, "Texas in the Days of the Cowboys: the Spanish Mission, etc," and a stereopticon lecture on "The Mysteries of the Honey Bee." Local children performed such plays as "Katie in Gooseland," "The Tom Thumb Wedding," and "Two Farces." Paid musicians included May's Banjo Club of Bridgeport. In addition, local musicians performed regularly.

Such programs were a major part of the education, amusement and entertainment in Sheffield before the arrival of the automobile, motion pictures and television -- three societal developments that led to a gradual decline in the Friendly Union's membership and attendance. By the 1980s programs centered more and more around dinners and socializing. The organization was gradually taking on a new identity.

In addition to presenting its programs, the Friendly Union operated a circulating library that augmented the meager collections of the public library. In 1884 it circulated 773 books to people attending its meetings and added 93 volumes to the collection, an acquisition rate maintained for several years. During the summer season the library was open one hour each week to accommodate tourists. The book collection is still intact today, an important documentation of the literary tastes of agricultural Sheffield in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Construction of a permanent home, Dewey Memorial Hall, the great stabilizing factor that assured the Friendly Union's future, came as a reaction to the death of Orville Dewey in 1882. Almost immediately following his passing, a group of admirers, primarily based in Boston, "anxious to do something to show their regard for him—and to cherish his memory— offered to build in Sheffield, his native town, a Memorial Hall in honor of his name, asking only that Sheffield provide the building lot." The result today is one of Sheffield's noblest structures.

Since it was the expressed wish of Dewey's family that the building should be the home of the Friendly Union, it was up to that organization to find the lot and fund its purchase. The path to this end was not smooth. The membership began talks on the subject at a special meeting on March 16, 1883, a "meeting [that] was somewhat spicy and of much interest to those who took part in it. The opinions regarding [building] lots were nearly as



Dewey Hall as it looked from Main Street around the turn of the century.

numerous as the members, and so diametrically opposed that it was evident no ring [with a preconceived plan] had been formed" beforehand. In fact, it was almost five years before a lot was finally acquired and ground broken.

A location near the train depot was considered essential, as most speakers arrived by that public transport. Several sites were formally considered. One suggested location would have placed it between the Old Parish Church and the Old Stone Store. Another was Pine Knoll behind the present library. And a third, a donated lot, would have placed the hall on the north-east corner of Maple Avenue and Route 7. The Dewey family favored a setting on the east side of Route 7 opposite the Old Stone Store, near the Vosburgh meeting place.

Yet none of these sites was used. For reasons understood chiefly by Miss Dewey, on April 5, 1887, as a Friendly Union trustee, she purchased a 60-by-125-foot lot where Dewey Memorial Hall stands today and the following October 31 she transferred ownership to the Friendly Union. Interestingly, construction began at that site in 1886 before the property was even in the hands of Miss Dewey. And it was not until October 31, 1887, 11 days after the building was completed and dedicated that she transferred title to the Friendly Union. Such were the relaxed business practices of that era.

The promised financing by the Orville Dewey admirers of Boston did not materialize as expected. They supplied only half of the \$5,000 promised. In addition to the \$1,000 raised locally to purchase the lot, the major amount, \$10,000, was donated by the Dewey family.

Construction finally began with James T. Levi of Norfolk, Conn., as the general contractor. He worked with a design by the eminent Boston architect William Ralph Emerson [1833-1918], who was a leader in developing the Shingle Style of architecture, a distinctly American creation previously not found in

Sheffield. The Shingle Style has its own sense of shape, mass, surface texture and color, and an overriding sense of exuberance and asymmetry, the whole tied together, not by order, but by a wrap of wood shingles or stone. It is capped with a steep, multi-sloped roof, which descends on and consolidates a seemingly informally planned structure. It is an architecture most often found in private homes. While there are excellent examples in the Berkshires, such as Naumkeag in Stockbridge, it is far more common in the eastern part of the state.

The primary building material for Dewey Memorial Hall was 500 loads of rubble stone collected from the Undermountain region of Sheffield. The impact of this common stone is heightened by locally quarried blue dolomite on doorways, windows, sills, caps and quoins. The disparate materials, textures and colors of the hall's solid and massive stone walls, shingle trim work, gables, carriage porch and awkwardly placed square tower, with lattice work painted in olive green, were tied together by an exaggerated, mountainous moss-green slate roof. The slate roof was replaced with brown asphalt within the last 15 years.

The interior is dominated by the main meeting room, originally painted robin's egg blue, with woodwork on the ceiling, walls and floors of southern pine. It's equipped with a small stage, dressing room and balcony. The room can hold over 250 people and that number, over 10 percent of the town's population, occasionally appeared for programs. The other major room is the cozy library, with fireplace, that houses the Friendly Union's collection of about 1,000 books.

When it was built, the hall had its own gas lighting system, parts of which are still visible. Since then, electricity has been added, the interior color changed, and a small kitchen and bathroom incorporated. The balcony, which is no longer usable seating space, was partitioned off and a small stair was added to

reach the second floor, although the original staircase is still in place.

In spite of the fine Emerson design, even at its construction Dewey Memorial Hall looked out of place on the small lot. It looks even more out of place today. When new, the building enjoyed a certain communion with nature, immersed as it was in mature evergreens on the south and east sides. Since then, the evergreens have been cut down and other structures and roadways built too close, making it difficult to see and appreciate the whole building.

The Friendly Union has recently redefined itself with a mission that visualizes the hall as a community resource for social, cultural and educational interaction among the residents and organizations of Sheffield, Ashley Falls and surrounding communities. But no matter what form it may take in the future, the Sheffield Friendly Union Library Association and its distinctive home have a strong historical and sentimental attachment among Sheffielders. Their combined histories provide enormous insights into the people and their town, an agricultural community that, through the efforts of a few forward thinking people, was in the forefront of a national, progressive, educational movement. It was Sheffield at its best.

—James R. Miller

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BARRINGTON STAGE PRESENTS 'FUNNY GIRL'

Barrington Stage opens its 2003 season with the classic musical *Funny Girl*, running 6/25 to 7/19 at the Consolati Performing Arts Center at Mt. Everett Regional High School in Sheffield. The story of entertainer Fanny Brice features a soaring score by composer Jule Styne and lyricist Bob Merrill and book by Isobel Lennert. The production will be directed by BSC Artistic Director Julianne Boyd, who directed many of BSC's past musicals, including *Cabaret* and last season's hit *South Pacific*, and choreographed by Tony Parise, with musical direction by Jono Mainelli.

Funny Girl, based on the real life story of comedienne Fanny Brice, traces the trials and triumphs of a poor Jewish girl from the lower East Side as she rises to stardom and learns a lesson in love. Songs include "People," "Don't Rain on My Parade" and "I Am the Greatest Star."

Yale graduate Jeanne Goodman stars as Fanny Brice. Goodman's stage credits include featured roles in

Lotte Lenya Remembers Kurt Weill at The Actors Studio, *Babes in Arms* and *Summer of '42* at Goodspeed Opera, and *Crossing Delancey* at The Manhattan Theatre Club.

Playing opposite Ms. Goodman, as the slick gambler Nick Arnstein, is three-time BSC alumni and Broadway veteran Chris Yates. Yates returns to the Consolati stage,

where he previously appeared as Cliff in *Cabaret* and Bruce Granit in *On the 20th Century*. His Broadway credits include *Les Miserables* and *Jane Eyre*. Craig Waletzko plays Eddie Ryan, Fanny's manager and closest friend. Waletzko has appeared on Broadway in *Steel Pier*, the final company of *Cats*, and *Gypsy* with Tyne Daly. Playing the role of Fanny's mother is Laura Kenyon. Kenyon's Broadway credits include roles in *Nine*, *Man of La Mancha*, *On the Town*, and *Titanic*.

Performances are Tues- Sun. For information and tickets, call the box office at 413-528-8888.

OTHER BSC PRODUCTIONS

Performances are at the Consolati Performing Arts Center, Sheffield, MA unless otherwise specified.

MainStage

July 23 - August 2: *Lobby Hero*. By Kenneth Lonergan. Directed by Rob Ruggiero.

August 7 - 23: *The Game* - World Premiere Musical. Based on *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. Book & lyrics by Amy Powers & David Topchik, music by Megan Cavallari. Directed by Julianne Boyd.

Performances: Tues., 7; Wed.-Sat. 8; Fri. matinees 2; Sun. matinees 5; Special Wed. matinees 7/16, 7/30, 8/20 at 2. Tickets: \$25-\$45.

Stage II

July 2 -13: *Ears On A Beatle* - World Premiere. By Mark St. Germain.

July 30 - August 10: *The Shape of Things* by Neil LaBute, directed by Andrew Volkoff.

Performances: Wed.-Sun. 7:30. Tickets: \$20 adult (\$25 Sat.)/\$10 student.

StudioSpace

(Rte 7, Sheffield, opposite the post office)

July 5 & 6 *Marnie Nixon: The Voice of Hollywood*. An evening of songs, film clips, and inside stories from the actress/vocalist who was the voice behind Audrey Hepburn in *My Fair Lady*, Natalie Wood in *West Side Story*, and Deborah Kerr in *The King and I*. Performances: Sat. & Sun. 8:30. Tickets: \$30.

July 11 *Jule Styne Cabaret*. One night only! The songs of Jule Styne, composer of *Bells Are Ringing*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, & *Gypsy*, among many others. Performed by the cast of *Funny Girl*.

Performance: Fri. 10:30, or immediately following the performance of *Funny Girl*. Tickets: \$25.

Youth Theatre

July 16 - August 10: *Once Upon a Mattress* CPAC: July 16-27 / Pittsfield, Springside Park: 7/30 - 8/10 Music: Mary Rodgers. Lyrics: Marshall Barer. Book: Jay Thompson, Dean Fuller & Marshall Barer. Directed by Edie Cowan. Performances: Wed.-Sat. 7; Fri.-Sun. 2. Tickets: \$14 adult/\$8 student.



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FRIENDLY UNION EVENTS

Classes at Dewey Hall. Starting in September, adult education classes will be held at Dewey Memorial Hall on Main St. (Rt 7). The first course offered will be "Writing a Life," composing your own autobiography. Classes will meet Thurs mornings, from 10:30 to 12, starting 9/18 for 6 to 8 weeks. Marcia Brolli, who for many years taught English at Mt. Everett High School, will be the instructor. There is a nominal charge.

A lecture series is also being planned. Starting in January, the Friendly Union will be offering classes under the aegis of the Taconic Learning Center.

Chicken BBQ. Celebrate the fall season with the Friendly Union's Annual Chicken Barbeque dinner on Sat., 9/20 at 6pm, held at Dewey Memorial Hall. Tickets are \$6 for adults and \$4 for children. Reserve a seat by called 229-7907 before 9/17. Tickets will also be sold at the door for dinner until the chicken runs out. Entertainment will accompany dinner. Join in and bring your family, neighbors and friends!



100 plus people gathered at the Sheffield Land Trust's Annual Meeting on June 28th to celebrate the protection of Balsam Hill Farm. The event was held at the farm on Hewins Street where, in 1989, Bob and Rose Chapin had hosted the land trust's first public meeting. Fourteen years later their son, Rob, placed an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) on the farm, ensuring that it will always remain in agriculture.

Rose and extended family (pictured above) attended, as did the Commissioner of the MA Dept. of Food and Agriculture, Doug Gillespie, who added his thanks to those of Land Trust president John Wightman, to the family for having the vision to leave such a lasting legacy for the town. Gillespie also spoke to the strength of agriculture in Sheffield and its importance to the town and the state as a whole, as well as to the challenges faced by today's farmers and how critical it is to support local farms.

While the meeting celebrated the farm's inclusion in the APR program, the Land Trust still has \$114,000 to raise to cover project expenses and repay the loan it took out to pay for the local share of the APR. That amount leveraged over \$750,000 in state funds.

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SHEFFIELD KIWANIS CLUB

Kiwanis volunteers. Kiwanis members continue to conduct monthly litter patrols along Rt. 7 and weed, water, and otherwise maintain the flowerbeds and planters on the Sheffield Town Green. We also continue to cook and serve our turn at the Breaking Bread soup kitchen at St. Peter's Center in Gt. Barrington.

Scholarship banquet. The annual scholarship banquet was on June 10. Three new awards added this year included the Rev. James Chase Memorial scholarship, the Citizen of the Year grant, and the Shmulsky Family Memorial award. The total amount awarded was \$23,200, a new high for the club. The honored seniors were from Mt. Everett and Monument Mountain High Schools, with continuing educational grants to students already in college.

Writing contest. Along with Randy Weinstein, author/illustrator Michael McCurdy and the Berkshire Record, the Sheffield Kiwanis was co-sponsor of the First Annual Berkshire Student Writing Contest. Some club members served as judges. The 9 finalists were guests at North Star Rare Books, where they received gift certificates for the Bookloft along with an autographed McCurdy book for their classroom. The three first-prize verses appeared in the Record. They

were chosen out of nearly 300 poetry entries.

Summer activities. With a successful golf tournament in the records, members are gearing up for the various duties at the Berkshire Choral Festival. The choristers begin arriving on July 6, when the Kiwanis Cocktail bar opens. We will also be parking cars for the five Saturday night concerts and selling refreshments at our trailer for the concertgoers. The last concert is 8/9.

One week later, on Sat., 8/16, Kiwanis will revive the steak roast so popular a few years ago. The new venture will be held at the Sheffield Town Park with entertainment, good food and drink, and fun for the whole family. Look for more details in ads as the date draws near.

The Kiwanis regular Little League season ended with the All-Star Game at French Park in Egremont on 6/29. Many players went to the championship last year in summer play. We hope they have another great season!

Storage space needed. A major club concern is the vacating of our storage facility behind Wheeler & Taylor, where we have housed the items used in our fund-raising activities. The new buyers, Barrington Stage Co., needed the space, so Kiwanis has moved out, using temporary quarters nearby through the end of August. The search begins for a more permanent home before the end of summer. Any offers? Call President Dave Smith at Sears, 644-9691.

Honor for Finkle. At a recent caucus of the Division 21 delegates of New England Kiwanis, Cathy Finkle of the Sheffield Club was elected the next Lt. Governor. Her territory includes 13 Kiwanis clubs from Sheffield to Springfield and Ludlow. Cathy has already attended training sessions and will take office on Oct. 1.

Other news. Dana Bartholomew, chairman of the Roadside Ladder Sign committee, reports a new addition at the corner of Rt. 7 and Hewins St.

We plan to have a Kiwanis information table at one of the Friday night Farmer's Market soon.

The weekly meetings of the Kiwanis Club are held at Limey's every Tuesday, 6:30pm.

—Richard Goodwin

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BARTHOLOMEW'S COBBLE PROGRAMS

All programs meet at the Cobble on Weatogue Rd. in Ashley Falls unless otherwise specified. Unless noted, fees for members are \$3 for adult; child 6-16 free; non-members, \$6 for adult; child \$2. 229-8600 for details.

Natural History Canoe Trip on the Housatonic River. Sundays, June through August, 8:30-11:30am. Fourth of July, 8:30am-11:30am. Paddle the winding Housatonic with a naturalist guide and look for wildlife. Bring a hat, sunscreen, water, and binoculars. Buy a family membership the day of the tour and get 2 adult tickets for the price of one. Pre-register. Members: adult \$15, child (10-16) \$10. Nonmembers: adult \$25, child (10-16) \$15.

Volunteer Work Parties. Thursdays, June through October, 9am-12pm. Help clear the Cobble of invasive species and learn to identify native plants. It's good, honest work, and it's fun! Free but call to let us know you're coming.

Awesome Insects (ages 4-7). Saturdays, July 26 ... Aug. 9. A fun-filled search for beautiful, bountiful insects. Strictly catch and release! Led by a grownup naturalist with a child-like mind. Wear long pants and socks. Pre-register.

Ferns of the Cobble. Sundays, June 22 through July 13, 1:30-3:30pm. Stroll through a natural rock garden dripping with ferns. Learn about the natural history of these ancient plants and how to identify different species. Handouts and hand lenses provided. Pre-register.

Old Growth Forests and Trees with Bob Leverett. Saturday, July 12, 10am-1pm. See the tallest cottonwoods in the state and learn how to measure them. Tips from an expert on reading the history of a

landscape. Slide show in case of rain. Pre-register.

Snake Search and Frog Find (ages 6-10). Saturdays, July 19 & Aug. 30, 10am-12pm. Search the Cobble with a wide-eyed naturalist guide. Learn about the habits and homes of these animals. Pre-register.

Wild Edibles with "Seasoned Grazer" Russ Cohen. Sunday, July 20, 1pm-4pm. Back by popular demand! Learn to identify dozens of wild edibles, how to collect them ethically, and how to incorporate them into your own cuisine. Pre-register.

Animal Tracks (ages 6-10). Sundays, July 27 and Aug. 17, 1:30pm-3:30pm. Learn to identify the tracks of our common wild neighbors. Make plaster casts with molds provided. Search for tracks and sign along the trails. Pre-register.

Summer Wildflower Walk. Sunday, August 3, 1:30pm-3pm. Travel through fields and forests with a naturalist guide to see what's blooming. Pre-register.

Dragonflies and Damselflies with Regional Ecologist Jose Garcia. Saturday, August 16, 10:30am-12:30pm. Learn about the fascinating life history of these insects, and how to identify several species. Pre-register.

Live Birds of Prey with Tom Ricardi. Saturday, August 23, 11am-12:30pm. Wildlife rehabilitator and former state wildlife biologist, Tom Ricardi, shows his collection hawks, falcons, owls and a bald eagle, up close and personal, and tells the story of their lives. Pre-register.

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April

- 7 William L. and Ruth L. Wuori to Richard C. Wuori and Laurie B. Pshenishny, property at 1396 County Rd, \$1.
- 8 Thomas M. Andrus to Jeffrey J. Lee, Trustee of the 1939 N. Main St. Nominee Trust, property at 1939 N. Main St, Transfer.
- 8 Wendy Ann Segalla to Richard M. Segalla, Sr, property at 275 S. Main St., \$10,000.
- 11 Loren Baritz to Phyllis Baritz, proerty at 12 Gannana Way, \$1.
- 11 William F. and Nanci D. Lucey to Earl C. Scott III and Heather L. Darby, property at 906 Ashley Falls Rd., \$146,000.
- 11 Reginald B. Madison to the 1699 N. Main St Nominee Trust, property at 1699 N. Main St., \$120,000.
- 14 Gloria R. Miller to Vivian & Harvey S. Kimmelman property at 7 Bay Ln, \$435,000.
- 14 Elsie D. West to David F. West and Diane D. Smith, property at 465 Silver St., Transfer.
- 14 Mary E. Cane to Teresa Kerstetter Thomas E. Cane, Michael P., Peter C. and Shawn R. Cassidy, property at 195 West Rd, Transfer.
- 18 Ruth E. Murray to Glenn R. Murray, property at 1134 Brush Hill Rd, \$85,000.
- 22 Deborah and Todd Clay to Todd Michael Clay and Maria Clay, property at 23 Alder Place, \$65,000.
- 25 Mabel L. Babb (Estate of) to Jean and Lynett Faucher, property at 5 Clayton Rd, \$80,000.
- 30 William and Judith A. Perry to Lawrence P. and Annette S. Iemolini, property at S. Undermountain Rd., Transfer.

May

- 7 Willard Travell Weeks et al to Michael Shiels and Edward Ustico, property at Hickey Hill Rd., \$750,000.
- 8 Robert A. and Lynn M. Mead to Janet C. Tone, property at 1691 Hewins St., \$155,500.
- 8 David J. Gasperini to David J. and Mari Grace Gasperini, property at 318 Clayton Rd., Transfer.

Real-estate transfers

- 9 SRF Realty Associates, In., to Mark S. Burns, property at County Rd., \$45,000.
- 12 Huldah Elizabeth Hunter to Bonnie H. Sheldon, property at 87 Huldahs Ln., Transfer.
- 13 Lincoln K. Smith to John J. and Theresa M. Smith, property at Sheffield Plain, Transfer.
- 14 Paula P. and David B. Weir to Paula P. and David B. Weir, property at 355 Polikoff Rd., Transfer.
- 20 Lovina E. Gulotta to William F. and Deborah J. Gulotta, property at 301 Miller Ave., Transfer.
- 22 Richard W. Gustafson to Ethel H. Benedict, property at Clayton Rd., Sheffield and Canaan, CT.
- 22 Dale L. and Sandra J. Alden to Dale L. & Sandra J. Alden, property at 1079 Ashley Falls Rd., Transfer.
- 23 John A. and Catherine C. Redpath to Alexandra H. Glover, property at 710 Bow Wow Rd., \$330,000.
- 27 Russell J. O'Connor Jr. to German Perez and Yeli Y. Arango, property at Clayton Rd., \$34,000.
- 29 Margaret L. Candee and John Delmolino Jr. to Tomcat, LLC, property at 1347 & 1349 N. Main St., \$160,000.
- 30 Barry and Charlotte Davidson to Karin A. Shanley, property at 109 Railroad St., \$170,000.

June

- 2 Jamie Lynn and Robert Marshall French to Cathryn M. Clary and Edward Schweizer, property at 375 Hewins St, \$580,000.
- 3 Richard A. Midwood to Richard A. Midwood and Jennie A. Fink, property at 622 West Rd., Transfer.
- 4 Jacqueline M. Robarge to Jacqueline M. and Richard L. Robarge, property at 186 Cobble Ln, Transfer.
- 6 John F. and Francine T. Eget to Anne Ghitman and R. Gilkes, property at 400 Shunpike Rd., \$333,000.

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calendar PAGE

Page numbers are given after an event if it's written up in this issue.

July

- 4 INDEPENDENCE DAY
- 7 Master Plan Economic Development committee meeting, Town Hall, 5pm (p.12-13)
- 12 Family Day, Dan Raymond & Col. Ashley Houses, 12-5pm (p.23)
- 14 Master Plan Housing committee meeting, Town Hall, 7:30pm (p.12-13)
- 19 Household Hazardous Waste Disposal, Stockbridge Recycle Center, 9am-12pm (p.15)
- 19 Tourism of the Past, Stone Store, 2pm (p.23)
- 21 Master Plan Steering committee meeting, Town Hall, 4:30pm (p.12-13)
- 26 Oil Disposal, Gt. Barrington Transfer Station, 9am-12pm (p.15)
- 26 Revolutionary Period Tours, Dan Raymond & Col. Ashley Houses, 1:30pm (p.23)
- 26 Household Hazardous Waste Disposal, Gt. Barrington Transfer Station, 9am-12pm (p.15)
- 30 SAL painting demonstration, Library, 7-9:30pm (p.19)
- 31 SAL watercolor painting workshop, Library, 10am-4pm (p.19)

August

- 2 Christ Church Fair, Christ Church, 10am-4pm
- 6 16th Annual Kare Bear Invitational, Egremont Country Club 1p.10)
- 16 Oil Disposal, Otis Transfer Station, 9am-11pm (p.15)
- 20 Oil Disposal, Lenox DPW, 4:30-6:30pm (p.15)
- 23 Revolutionary Period Tours, Dan Raymond & Col. Ashley Houses, 1:30pm (p.23)
- 23 Pig Roast, American Legion Hall (p.23)
- 28 Master Plan Steering committee meeting, Town Hall, 4:30pm (p.12-13)

September

- 1 LABOR DAY
- 5-7 & 12-14 Sheffield in Celebration

ONGOING CALENDAR ITEMS

(Meetings or events that occur on a less than weekly basis are noted by number - i.e. "1st", "3rd" indicates meetings the first and third times that day occurs in the month.
* indicates appointment needed.

Mondays:

Food Assistance Program, Old Parish Church, 9-10:30am (p7)
Board of Selectmen, Town Hall, 7pm, 1st, 3rd, 4th
Board of Health, Town Hall, 7pm, 2nd

Tuesdays:

Council on Aging, Dewey Hall, 9am, 3rd
Physical Fitness Class, Dewey Hall/Senior Center, 9am
Children's Story Hour, Library, 10am
Building Inspector, Town Hall, 6pm - 8:30pm
Ashley Falls Historic District Commission, Town Hall, 6:30pm, 2nd
National Alliance for the Mentally Ill Support Group, Fairview Hospital Library, 6:30pm, 4th
Planning Board, Town Hall, 7pm, 1st, 3rd
Industrial Development Commission, Town Hall, 7:30pm, last

Thursdays:

Building Inspector, Town Hall, 7am - 1pm
Kid's Club, Old Parish Church, 9am-12pm
*Blood Pressure Clinic, Dewey Hall/Senior Center, 9am-12pm, 2nd
Physical Fitness Class, Dewey Hall/Senior Center, 9am
Conservation Commission, Town Hall, 7pm, 2nd, 4th

Fridays:

Farmers' Market, Old Parish Parking Lot, 4-7pm

Saturdays:

Contra Dancing, Sheffield Grange, Rte 7, 8:30pm, 4th

SENIOR CENTER CALENDAR

See also regular listings above

July

- *7 Foot Clinic, 9pm
- *9 Bloodpressure Clinic, 9am

August

- *7 Hearing Clinic, 11am

Physical fitness classes are suspended for the summer. However, they will begin again in September, again subsidized by a grant from the Governor's Committee on Fitness and Sports.

ALSO: Churches & Services, p.7 ♦ Art League, p.11&13 ♦ Barrington Stage, p.26 ♦ Cobble, p.29

PLEASE HELP SUPPORT THE SHEFFIELD TIMES!

I want to support the Sheffield Times! Enclosed is my tax deductible donation of _____, made payable to the
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JOIN THE SHEFFIELD TIMES TEAM

Working with the *Sheffield Times* is a great way to meet and reconnect with people & events in your community, and to help keep that community informed.

WANTED: ADVERTISING MANAGER

Enjoy connecting with local business people and organizations!

This position involves managing ad sales, renewals, and copy for the *Sheffield Times* editors and layout person every other month to get the paper out. We have many loyal advertisers and most are repeat customers, so there is more follow-up and modifications work than "new sales".

The job averages 20 hours, every other month. Good organizational skills, e-mail, computer literacy and knowledge of simple spreadsheets are important in order to track ad bookings and invoices.

The most important ingredient is an interest and enthusiasm. The process has been simplified and efficient. Please e-mail to sheffieldtimes@hotmail.com.

WANTED: LAYOUT MANAGER

Be creative and build your resume!

The position involves laying out the text and ads of each bimonthly issue, working with the editors of the *Sheffield Times*, including building new or modifying existing ads. Computer skills and familiarity with PageMaker (or Quark Xpress) are important, but we are willing to train the right individual. An e-mail account is necessary, but can be provided if you don't have one. We will provide the software and fonts. The time needed to complete each issue will vary with the skills of the applicant and how much of the programs need to be learned. Timing is the two weeks before publication every other month.

For more information contact Kathy Orlando at 229-8789 or wildkato@aol.com and sheffieldtimes@hotmail.com.

The Sheffield Times is a community supported volunteer, but there are small honorariums associated with the above as a "Thank You" and in recognition of service to the community.

**Sheffield
TIMES**

Community Newsletter for
Sheffield & Ashley Falls, MA
P.O. Box 1339,
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sheffieldtimes@hotmail.com